



RESEARCH ARTICLE

REVISITING PARENTING STYLES AND ITS EFFECTS ON CHILDREN

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 08th August, 2016
Received in revised form
22nd September, 2016
Accepted 25th October, 2016
Published online 30th November, 2016

Key words:

Parenting, Positive psychology,
Social interaction, Subjective well-being,
Academic success.

ABSTRACT

Parents play a crucial role in their children's lives during their growing up years. They help shape their children's skills, behaviour, attitudes and value systems that are necessary for successful adjustment in an ever changing society. Parenting Styles are a composite set of behaviours, practices and an emotional climate which provide the context in which children learn social and instrumental competence. For several decades, researchers have been interested in the influence of parenting styles on development of children. While the concept of Parenting Styles, its classification and influence of each style on children's personality originated in the western world, several researchers in other parts of the world have questioned the concept, its classification and its impact on children as related research conducted in other continents have often given contradictory results. This review paper attempts to explore and understand the concept of parenting styles and its influence across cultures and regions.

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Citation: Shobha Bharat and Dr. Reeta Sonawat, 2016. "Revisiting parenting styles and its effects on children", *International Journal of Current Research*, 8, (11), 41343-41352.

INTRODUCTION

Parenting style is defined as a constellation of action, behavior and attitudes communicated from parent to child, providing an emotional climate or context in which parental practices, goals, and behaviors are exhibited (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Researchers have been interested in the study of relationship between parenting and child behaviour outcomes for many decades. Parents and family have been viewed as the most important influences on the developing child by psychologists, child development professionals, sociologists, educators and policy makers. Parenting Styles is one of the most robust approaches to study how parents influence children's social and instrumental competence. This paper attempts to understand the effects of differing parenting styles on their children. Parenting style captures two important elements: Parental responsiveness and parental demandingness (Maccoby and Martin, 1983). Researchers have identified or categorized parenting styles on the basis of levels of demandingness or responsiveness that parents exhibit in their interactions with their children. They have also been identified according to the levels of control and warmth displayed by parents on a regular basis and in a variety of situations and differences in patterns of parental values, practices, behaviours. Additionally, each of these parenting styles has

been associated with child outcomes. Baumrind (1991) has identified four different types of parenting styles with two styles in each category: Parental Demandingness-Authoritarian, Authoritative and Parental responsiveness - Neglecting and Permissive.

According to Baumrind (1991) parental styles can be classified as follows:

- Parental Demandingness
- Parental Responsiveness

Parental demandingness: It (also referred to as behavioral control) refers to "the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys" (Baumrind, 1991). The demands that parents make on the children to become integrated into the family by expecting mature behaviour, providing supervision, giving direction and disciplining children when required is called as demandingness. It is subdivided in to two types-

Authoritative: Authoritative parents seek to direct their child's activities in a 'rational issue- oriented manner'. They encourage verbal give and take by sharing with their child 'the reasoning behind parental policy' and they would solicit 'the child's objections when the child refuses to conform'. In this

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way, an authoritative parent 'exerts firm control but does not hem the child in with restrictions' (Baumrind, 1978, p. 245).

Authoritarian: Parents, on the other hand, do not encourage verbal give and take. They value obedience and 'favour punitive, forceful measures' when parent-child conflict arises. Also, 'authoritarian parents may be very concerned and protective or they may be neglecting' (Baumrind, 1978, p. 244).

Parental responsiveness: It (also referred to as parental warmth or supportiveness) refers to "the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands" (Baumrind, 1991).

Parental behaviours that foster self-regulation, self-assertion, individuality in children through parental behaviour that is sensitive, warm and supportive is described as parental responsiveness. It is subdivided into two types-

Permissive: A permissive parents 'sees him- or herself as a resource for the child to use as he wishes, but not as an active agent responsible for shaping and altering the child's ongoing and future behavior . . . Some permissive parents are very protective and loving, while others are self-involved and offer freedom as a way of evading responsibility for the child's development' (Baumrind, 1978).

Neglecting: A neglectful parent does not exhibit any degree of either responsiveness or warmth, nor do they exercise any degree of control or demandingness. Maccoby and Martin (1983) call this parenting style Indifferent-Uninvolved. They describe these parents as emotionally detached. Indifferent-uninvolved, or neglectful, parents tend to keep their children at a distance, responding to child demands only to make them stop requesting for attention.

Classical Parenting

There have been a number of theories on how values, goals, skills and attitudes have been transferred from one generation to the next. In the seventeenth century, John Locke proposed that children were born as blank slates or 'tabula rasa' on which parents could transmit their values and beliefs. On the other hand, Jean Jacques Rousseau (1762) believed that children were 'innately good' and parents and society are responsible in maintaining values and goodness innate in children.

Parenting and the socialization process

The manner in which a child acquires skills, behaviour and attitudes that is necessary for successful adaptation in society. Several key stakeholders or socializing agents such as parents, teachers, siblings and peers play an instrumental role in the child's development. Parents play a very important and a unique role as socializing agents. While peers and teachers move in and out of children's lives, parents remain a constant influence. With this longitudinal perspective, parents have the opportunity to witness their child grow and change as they meet new friends, advance in school, and develop their own goals, values, attitudes, and interests. Parents serve as a role model during their children's development (Bandura, 1989) and provide guidance, appropriate experiences and

opportunities in an attempt to transmit values and goals to their children (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994). Similar to the philosophers from centuries ago, developmental and educational psychologists of today are interested in gaining a better understanding of the socialization process by which parents transmit their values, goals, skills, and attitudes to their children (Grusec, 1997). While reviewing the literature on parenting styles, authoritative upbringing is consistently associated with both instrumental and social competence and lower levels of problem behavior in both boys and girls at all developmental stages (Baumrind, 1991; Darling & Steinberg, 1993). The positive effects of authoritative parenting and the harmful effects of uninvolved or demanding intrusive parents are evident as early as the preschool years and continue throughout adolescence and into early adulthood (McKay, 2006; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts & Dornbusch, 1994). Some of the harmful effects are seen in competence, confidence, and low self-esteem as well as anxious and/or aggressive behavior in children. Research findings based on Baumrind's (1967) original threefold typology and Maccoby and Martin's (1983) fourfold model generally indicated that the authoritative parenting style is associated with better child outcomes than either authoritarian or permissive.

Authoritative parenting has influenced positive behavioural outcomes such as increased competence, autonomy and self-esteem, better problem solving skills, more self-reliance, less deviance and better peer relations (Steinberg *et al*, 1994). Children of authoritative parents also show less aggressive behaviour as compared to children who have experienced other parenting styles (Hart, DeWolf, Wozniak, & Burts, 1992; Putallaz & Heflin, 1990; Rubin, Stewart & Chen, 1994; Smetana, 1995; Steinberg *et al.*, 1994). Research based on Baumrind's model has yielded fairly consistent findings on the parenting behaviors that promote positive adjustment in children, particularly among middle-class, Caucasian families (Baumrind, 1989; Chao, 2001; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Park & Bauer, 2002; Querido, Warner, & Eyberg, 2002). Authoritative parenting (characterized by emotional supportiveness, limit setting, and firm yet responsive disciplinary strategies) is consistently associated with positive educational, social, emotional, and cognitive developmental outcomes in children. Analysis of various parent interviews, child reports, and parent observations has consistently found that children and adolescents whose parents are authoritative rate themselves and are rated by objective measures as more socially and instrumentally competent than those whose parents are non-authoritative (Baumrind, 1991).

A study by Buri *et al.* (1988) on 230 college students whose mean age was 19 years measured their self-esteem and parenting styles as perceived by students. Findings of the study showed that students' self-esteem was significantly and positively correlated with their parent's authoritative. The correlation between students' self-esteem and parents' authoritarianism were significant and negative. Authoritative parenting was reported to be more effective in the development of child's self-esteem than authoritarian parenting style. Another study by Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg & Dornbusch (1991) explored the impact of Parenting styles on adolescents' functioning: psychosocial progress, educational outcomes, reactions to stressful situations, and deviant behavior. The study sample consisted of 4,081 ninth through twelfth grade students, ages 14 to 18 years old, from nine high schools in Wisconsin and California. The sample was ethnically diverse

including 9% African-Americans, 14% Asian-Americans, and 12% Hispanic-Americans, and 60% non-Hispanic Whites (Lamborn *et al.*, 1991). Adolescents from authoritative homes scored highest on all measures of the outcome variables and those from neglectful families reported major deficiencies along the four dimensions of adolescents' functioning. Adolescents from authoritarian families reported fewer behavior problems and more engagement with their school than students from the indulgent families. As expected, adolescents from indulgent families reported better self-perceptions in comparison to students from the authoritarian families. One limitation of the study was that parenting styles describe general patterns of parental practices and do not give information of how a specific parental practice influences a specific outcome variable. Another limitation was that the study used only students' verbal reports which could be considered less objective. There was quite clear and consistent evidence that parenting style had statistically significant and substantively large net associations with a wide range of youth outcome variables. It was striking that social class had no net association with teenagers' subjective well-being and self-esteem, or with their health and risky behaviour. Rather, it is parenting style that matters. Specifically, authoritative parenting is associated with higher self-esteem and subjective well-being, and lower odds of smoking, getting involved in fights, or having friends who use drug.

Children of authoritarian parents showed negative behaviour outcomes such as aggressive behaviour, decreased emotional functioning, unrealistic social-cognitive representation, and lower levels of self-confidence and perceptions of academic and social capabilities (Hart *et al.*, 1997; Rubin *et al.*, 1994; Steinberg *et al.*, 1994). Additionally, Authoritarian parenting with harsh childhood discipline is strongly linked to later delinquent behaviour in children (Farrington, 1990, 1995; Snyder & Patterson, 1987; Wasserman *et al.*, 1996). Authoritarian parenting (characterized by strong control and limited emotional support and responsiveness) and permissive parenting (characterized by high levels of emotional support/responsiveness and little discipline/control) are typically linked with poorer child outcomes (Baumrind, 1989; Chao, 2001; Park & Bauer, 2002; Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch, 1991). Children and adolescents from authoritarian families tend to perform moderately well in school and be uninvolved in problem behavior (Weiss & Schwarz, 1996), but they have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression (Miller, Cowan, Cowan, Hetherington, & Clingempeel, 1993).

Permissive parenting has also been related to aggression and delinquent behaviour. Neglect, indifference and poor supervision are all permissive practices that have a negative impact on children's socio-emotional development. When family environments fail to provide structure or nurture self-esteem, rejection or neglect from home forces children to seek acceptance from peers who share similar backgrounds outside homes. Many studies have been done on parenting styles to understand the connection with delinquency. Adolescents from permissive homes exhibit deviant behaviours such as drug and alcohol abuse, misconduct in schools, non-conforming, emotional and impulsive behaviours. Research has primarily concentrated on the relationship between parenting and childhood or adolescent delinquency (Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Conger, 1991; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994; Wasserman, Miller, Pinner, &

Jaramillo, 1996), but little is known about how adult offenders have been parented. However, the largest differences found between children with parents that are uninvolved and negligent is the fact that they have a tendency to be unengaged socially (Lamborn, Mounts Steinberg & Dornbusch, 1991)

A study conducted on 128 prison inmates and 337 non inmates assessed retrospective perceptions of their fathers' and mothers' parenting styles through parenting questionnaires. The results revealed that inmates reported higher incidence of authoritarian and permissive styles as compared to non-inmates and lower incidence of the authoritative parenting style and dimensions (Chipman, Olsen, Klein, Hart, and Robinson, 2000). Research on neglectful parents is lacking because they are usually not very responsive or involved in their children's lives and, therefore, are not interested in being studied. Lamborn *et al.* (1991) were able to study the adolescent children of neglectful parents by receiving permission from the school to include all children unless the parents contacted the researchers to request their children be excluded from the study. Results of this study indicated that children of neglectful parents scored lowest on measures of psychosocial competence and highest on measures of psychological and behavioral dysfunctions, the opposite of children of authoritative parents.

Parenting Styles and Academic Achievement

Academic achievement can be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as extracurricular skills, punctuality, assertiveness, arts, culture and the like. An academic achievement is something you do or achieve at school. It includes qualities such as academic aptitude, academic ability, academic aspiration, intelligence, achievement potential, educational motivation, academic performance, grade point average, academic status, academic attainment, academic skills etc. The relationship between parenting styles and academic achievement has been well documented. Numerous studies reflect that parenting styles have been associated with academic success (Dornbusch *et al.*, 1987; Hurrelmann, Engel, Holler & Nordlone, 1988; Paulson, 1994; Steinberg, Elmen and Mounts, 1989). Some of the studies specifically show that authoritarian and permissive parenting styles are associated with poor academic grades, college adjustment and self-esteem of adolescents (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg & Dornbusch, 1991). Adolescents when brought up by authoritative parents experience heightened developmental outcomes (Dornbusch *et al.*, 1987; Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994, Steinberg *et al.*, 1992). Steinberg *et al.* (1992) found that authoritative parenting was related to adolescent (14 to 18 year olds) school performance and engagement. Similarly, in another study, Steinberg *et al.* (1989) found that parents who demonstrated higher levels of authoritative parenting through acceptance, psychological autonomy, and control facilitated student achievement in school. Several studies in the literature propose that the authoritative parenting style is associated with higher academic achievement (Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch & Darling, 1992; Hickman, Bartholomae, & McKenry, 2000).

Cohen and Rice (1997) surveyed a sample of 386 matched parent-child pairs in order to examine the relevance of parenting style to adolescent educational achievement. Results indicated that students with low grades rated their parents as less authoritative, more permissive (indulgent) and more

authoritarian than did students with high grades. Based on the study results, researchers concluded that perceived authoritative parenting by students was associated with higher academic achievement.

Paulson (1994) investigated the relationship between parenting characteristics and achievement among a sample of 247 adolescents. Standardized scales were used to operationalize parenting style in order to examine its association to academic achievement which was measured by adolescent self-reported grades. Results indicated that higher levels of parental control accompanied by both maternal and paternal responsiveness (characteristic of authoritative parenting) were related to higher academic achievement. Paulson concluded that authoritative parents have children who perform better in schools. Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch and Darling (1992) examined the impact of authoritative parenting on the school achievement of an ethnically and socioeconomically heterogeneous sample of 6400 American 14-18 year olds. Standardized scales and other self-report instruments were used to assess the relationship between parenting style and academic outcomes. The results indicated that authoritative parenting had a significant impact on adolescent school performance during the high school years. This was seen in both the significant correlations between authoritative parenting and the indices of achievement as well as in the comparison of academic scores among adolescents from households varying in authoritative parenting. On both indices, adolescents from clearly authoritative homes scored higher than their peers from homes that were neither unquestionably non authoritative or unquestionably authoritative, who in turn scored higher than students from definitely non authoritative homes. The researchers concluded that authoritative parenting promotes better academic achievement, and students who describe their parents as authoritative report better school performance.

Pittman and Chase-Lansdale (2001) explored associations between parenting and multiple adolescent outcomes in a sample of 302 adolescent girls and their female caregivers from impoverished neighborhoods. A mixed methods design involving standardized instruments and in-depth interviews was used to examine the influence of parenting style on academic achievement. Results indicated that parenting style groups were significantly related to teenagers' reported grades, and adolescents with disengaged (neglectful) mothers had significantly lower grades than adolescents with mothers who displayed any other parenting style. The researchers concluded that adolescent girls with authoritative mothers showed the best adjustment of all parenting style groups, while girls with disengaged (neglectful) mothers showed the worst adjustment of all parenting style groups. Gonzales, Cauce, Friedman and Mason (1996) investigated the influence of parenting variables on the school performance of 120 African American junior high students. Instruments included maternal reports of parenting variables and adolescent self-reports of grade point average. Results indicated that maternal support and the presence of warm, affectionate parent-child relationships (characteristic of authoritative parenting) had a significant influence on all positive child development outcomes including academic achievement. It was further concluded by the researchers that maternal support had a significant effect on adolescent grades. This set of findings, however, has not been universal. For example, Baumrind (1972) found that authoritarian parenting, while eliciting fear and compliance in White children, elicited assertiveness in African-American

females. Darling (1991) conducted an exemplary large-scale study on the relationship between parenting styles and academic achievement and found a significant relationship between the two variables. However, the subjects in her studies were predominantly from white middle and upper class families. Such research did not advance knowledge about the specific needs of children from other cultural backgrounds, such as African American and Latino children, and did not aid in developing clinical interventions for this group (Dornbusch, Ritter, Roberts & Farleigh *et al.*, 1987; Sue & Sue, 1999).

In another study, Der Sarkissian (2002) focused on parents' parenting practices and their influence on their children's educational outcomes in Armenian-American families. Although this study did not examine parenting styles according to Baumrind's typology, she examined some aspects of parental involvement. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between Armenian adolescents' perceptions about the degree to which their parents influenced their interest and involvement in academic pursuits. The researchers included 204 Armenian American 9th and 10th grade students for this study. The study concluded that the positive relationship between parents' parental educational attainment and their children's educational aspirations could be explained by the fact that parents might act as role models for their children's interest and engagement in educational pursuits. The author also noted that one of the explanations, that positive parental behaviors such as support and monitoring, were positively related to children's academic motivation, could be that those parental behaviors enabled students to develop a positive self-image, a desire to achieve and the assurance that they could rely on parents for the support and guidance on the way to accomplishing their educational goals. Support and monitoring are likely to be characteristics of authoritative parenting.

In another study, Dornbusch *et al.* (1987) found that authoritative parenting style, compared to authoritarian and permissive styles, was more conducive to children's better school performance across different ethnic groups. The only ethnic group in this study that deviated from this finding was Asian-Americans. These, more than other groups, reported authoritarian parenting styles in their families, yet they also reported higher school grades. The researchers speculated that the typology of parenting styles had the best fit with the school performance of White students because it was devised mainly based on the research studies with middle-class White families (Baumrind, 1966, 1967). Despite the conclusions about the effectiveness of authoritative style, those research studies (Baumrind, 1966, 1967; Buri *et al.*, 1983) were of a correlational nature and could not establish causality between parenting style and child outcome. Also those studies were based on the samples of predominantly White and middle-class families and the applicability of their findings to different ethnic minorities was not clear. A review of the research on parenting styles and their influence on adolescent school achievement suggests that this relationship varies based on the context (ethnicity, and socioeconomic strata) in which the family resides.

Parenting Style, Race and Ethnicity

Recent studies in many parts of the world have sought to further specify the dimensions and correlates of different parenting styles and to assess whether the construct of

parenting styles can be generalized to the population beyond White middle class families in United States. Review of literature on parenting styles and its impact on child outcomes have challenged the conclusion that authoritative parenting promotes higher academic achievement and positive child outcomes. Many variables such as ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status and educational level of parents have led to different conclusions about the relationship between parenting styles and child outcomes. In addition many researchers have attempted to re-examine the categories of parenting styles. A group of researchers looked at whether Western parenting practices were valued in similar ways in Asian American cultures. The purpose was to understand whether White and Asian Americans had different understandings of what parental support and control mean. In Asian cultures, parents often show their love for children through "instrumental" support; that is, they make sacrifices. Parents in most cultures make sacrifices for their children, yet this dimension is not highlighted in studies of White families. Asian parents support and monitor their children may differ from White parents because those concepts mean different things to them. For example, differences in answers to meaning of support and control suggest that Chinese American youth think of support and control differently than White or Filipino Americans (Chan and Koo (2011).

Chao (1994) argued that the concepts authoritative and authoritarian parenting are ethnocentric and that Chinese and other Asian childrearing patterns are better described as emphasizing indigenous Confucian training ideologies that blend parental love, concern, involvement, and physical closeness with firm control, governance, and teaching of the child. Among European American parents, "training" was perceived negatively and associated with strict, rigid, militaristic practices (Chao, 1994). Collectively, these findings underscore the socio-historical and cultural specificity of childrearing values and behaviors and suggest that much greater attention be devoted to the conceptualization, interpretation, and empirical investigation of parenting practices among marginalized and minority families in diverse contexts. A substantial body of research conducted before the 1990s, predominantly involving White families, demonstrated the importance of socio-economic resources for effective parenting.

Lueng, Lau and Lam (1998) in their examination of cross-cultural generalizability of the relationship between parenting style and academic achievement, incorporated a new proposed approach by Chao and Sue (1996) which places more emphasis on parental control and the authoritarian behaviors of Asian parents. Within the context of Asian culture, this model further classifies the concepts of parental authoritarianism and parental attentiveness into two different aspects: general and academic. The researchers incorporated the additional classifications of parenting style in order to determine which aspect, general or academic, has a greater influence on school performance. A standardized questionnaire was used to measure dimensions of parenting style conceptualized by Chao and Sue (1996) and school performance was measured by self-reported grades. Study conclusions were supportive of Chao and Sue's newly proposed model emphasizing the importance of parental control and authoritarian behavior of Asian parents, but not supportive of Baumrind's typology which suggests that authoritarian parenting contributes to lower social competence and academic achievement.

Not only is there evidence from some studies that authoritarian parenting does not necessarily contribute to lower academic outcomes, some researchers have proposed that authoritative parenting does not always promote higher academic achievement, particularly among Asian American and African American samples. For example, researchers have found that the relationship between authoritative parenting and academic achievement may be significantly lower (although positive) among African Americans in comparison to Asian, European or Hispanic American adolescents (Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch & Darling, 1992). In their examination of the cross-cultural generalizability of the relationship between parenting style and academic achievement among a sample of Chinese, European American and Australian adolescents, Leung, Lau and Lam (1998) found that although academic achievement was negatively related to academic authoritarianism in all three cultural groups, academic achievement was positively related to general authoritarianism among Chinese adolescents. Study conclusions indicated that although Chinese parents tend to be more authoritarian, their children still perform well in school and that Chinese adolescents are not at all in a disadvantaged position.

Despite the widespread hypothesis that authoritative parenting leads to higher academic achievement, Chao and Sue (1996) found that authoritarian parenting contributed to higher achievement outcomes among Asian students due to an emphasis on obedience and strictness in the culture. In a last few decades as researchers started to examine parenting practices in populations other than White, middle-class families, it has become apparent that the influence of parenting styles may vary depending on the cultural context of the family (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Baumrind (1989), who worked mainly with Caucasian families, emphasized the importance of research examining parental practices in ethnic minority families. Baumrind (1989) noted that research with ethnic minorities should take into consideration the factor of bicultural identity that is absent in a dominant culture. Other researchers started to question the applicability of Western psychological constructs to non-Western cultures (Stewart, Bond, Zaman, McBride-Chang, Rao, Ho, & Fielding, 1999). For example, Chao (1994) suggested that parental strictness, which is considered to be one of the negative sides of Western authoritarian parenting, could be perceived by a Chinese child as a sign of parental attentiveness and caring. Thus, parents in the Chinese culture could engage in behaviors typical authoritarian parenting style that is in accordance with the interests of the child's socialization (Rudy & Grusec, 2001). Despite the major role of culture in parenting, there are relatively few published studies on the parent-adolescent relationship from a cross-cultural perspective. The respondents of the research reported in most published articles were American adolescents, and only a few belonged to ethnic groups in the United States (Claes, Lacourse, Bouchard, & Perucchini, 2003).

According to a global evaluation study by Lamborn *et al.* (1991) and Steinberg *et al.* (1994), it was reinforced that authoritative parental style was the optimal style as it showed better youth outcome when compared to authoritarian and indulgent parental styles. Though numerous studies in USA using the samples of middle class European, American families fully supported the idea that the authoritative parenting style was always associated with optimum youth outcome. (E.g. Baumrind, 1967, 1971; Gray and Steinberg,

1999; Lamborn *et al.* 1991, Dent and Flay, 1996; Steinberg *et al.*, 1994), results from studies in USA with ethnic minority groups were contradictory. For African-American adolescents there was no relationship between authoritative parenting and academic achievement (Deater-Deckard and Dodge, 1997; Baumrind, 1992) Chinese-American samples showed that children of authoritarian parents perform better in academics than children of authoritative parents (Chao, 1994, 1996, 2001). Research on parenting styles in Latino samples has been leading to questions about conceptualization and measurement of parenting styles in this ethnic/cultural group. This lack of consensus may result from the chasm between concepts (e.g., authoritarian parenting) and observable parenting behaviors (e.g., warmth) in this ethnic group. In this sample, the four traditional parenting categories did not capture Latino families well. The combination of characteristics resulted in eight possible parenting styles. The data showed the majority (61%) of Latino parents as “protective parents.” Further, while mothers and fathers were similar in their parenting styles, expectations were different for male and female children (Rodriguez, Donovan & Crowley, 2009). Quos and Zhao (1995) found that authoritarian parenting predicted greater satisfaction with parent-child relationship in Chinese children while Dwairy, Achoui & Farah (2006) found that authoritarian parenting did not harm adolescents’ mental health as it did in the Western Societies. Another set of studies suggested that adolescents who label their parents as indulgent obtain higher or equal scores on different outcomes as compared to adolescents who label their parents as authoritative. German adolescents, who perceived their parents as indulgent-permissive seem to show a distinctive better psycho-social adjustment (Wolfradt, Hempel & Miles, 2003).

Kim & Rohner (2002) found that Korean-American adolescents brought up by authoritative fathers were not academically better than youth raised by indulgent fathers. Researchers in South European Country such as Spain (Martinez & Garcia, 2007), Turkey (Turkel & Tezer, 2008), Italy (Marchetti, 1997) or South American Country such as Mexico (Villalobos, Cruz & Sanchez, 2004) & Brazil (Martinez & Garcia, 2008) found that children or adolescents of indulgent parent performed equally or better on several youth outcomes. Rai, Pandey and Kumar (2009) studied perceived parental rearing style and personality among Khasi adolescents. The findings of their study reveal that father’s parenting style is different for male and female child. He has significantly more rejecting behavior for male child and emotionally warmth for female child. Another study was conducted on Malaysian students where they studied the relationship of parenting style and coping capabilities of secondary school students. Malaysian fathers and mothers were perceived at similar level of authoritarian parenting whereas mothers are perceived more authoritative than fathers. It was concluded that authoritarian style of both father and mother and authoritative parenting style of mothers correlates with adolescent coping capabilities. Diana Baumrind’s parenting styles reflect the dominant North American view of child development and may be misleading if applied to other cultures. Among Asian-Americans, obedience and strictness-rather than being associated with harshness and domination seem to have more to do with caring concern, and involvement and maintaining family harmony. Traditional Chinese culture, with its emphasis on respect for elders, stresses adult’s responsibility to maintain the social order by teaching children socially appropriate behaviour. This obligation is carried out

through firm control of the child and even by physical punishment if necessary (Zhao, 1991).

Although Asian American parenting is frequently labeled as authoritarian, the warmth and supportiveness that characterize Chinese American family relationships more closely resemble Baumrind’s authoritative parenting but without emphasis on American values of individuality, choice and freedom. (Chao, 1994). In a comparative study of 500 Chinese American and European American adolescents, it was the close parent-child relationships that had a positive effect on school performance. Authoritative parenting had less effect on second generation Chinese Americans than on European Americans, and had no effect on first generation Chinese Americans, who may have had the benefit of warm supportive parenting but with stricter parental control (Chao, 2001). Researchers have identified a parenting style in some African American families that falls between Baumrind’s Authoritarian and Authoritative styles. This style called “No Nonsense parenting”, combines warmth and affection with firm parental control. Parents using this style regard stringent control and insistence on obedience to rules as necessary safeguards for children growing up in dangerous neighborhoods, and such children see this kind of parenting as evidence of concern about their well-being. Although recent studies have supported the significant influence of parenting style on academic achievement, such findings have not been consistent across different cultures, ethnicity and socioeconomic status (Spera, 2005).

Recent studies have challenged the notion that authoritative parenting promotes higher academic achievement, noting that contextual variables such as race, ethnicity and culture should be considered and controlled for in examining this relationship (Weiss & Schwartz, 1996). In addition, some researchers have proposed a reconceptualization of the authoritative parenting style as well as consideration of middle-range categories of parenting style in regard to its impact on academic achievement (Gray & Steinberg, 1999; Slicker, 1996). Still other researchers have concluded that, unlike previous studies, non-White adolescents and their parents were largely unclassifiable in the traditional parenting style dimensions and that there exists an apparent need for a broader conceptualization of parenting style (McBride-Chang & Chang, 1998).

Parenting Styles and Socioeconomic class

Parenting styles might operate differently across families with different cultures, socioeconomic standings (SES), and ethnic backgrounds, with authoritative parenting resulting in different child outcomes depending on the culture and context in which the particular family resides. Hoff, Laursen, and Tardif (2002) have suggested that there are two primary ways in which SES influences parenting. The first way is that the unique combinations of SES subcomponents (parents’ education, income, labor status) operate to globally influence parental socialization. The second is that SES operates as a proxy variable for a number of other factors (e.g., resources within the home, time availability of the parents, financial stress). The latter suggests that it is not the combination of parental education, income level, and labor force status that influences parental socialization, but rather other factors that vary as a function of SES that influence parenting and the home learning environment.

Several studies (Bluestone & Tamis-LeMonda, 1999; Dombusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Farleigh, 1987; Dombusch *et al.* (1987) found that parents with higher education levels tended to be higher on measures of authoritative than parents with lower education levels. Similar findings, suggesting a relationship between parental education level and parental style was found in studies conducted in Egypt and China (Chen, Dong, & Zhou, 1997; Von der Lippe, 1999). Lower SES families are more likely to use an authoritarian style than an authoritative style, indicating that SES or certain characteristics of low SES families have an impact on parenting style rather than ethnicity. (Fursienberg, 1993; Glasgow, Dombusch, Toryer, Steinberg, & Ritter, 1997; Kelley, Power, & Wimbush, 1992) Dombusch *et al.* (1987) found that parents with higher education levels tended to be higher on measures of authoritative than parents with lower education levels. Similar findings, suggesting a relationship between parental education level and parental style was found in studies conducted in Egypt and China (Chen, Dong, & Zhou, 1997; Von der Lippie, 1999). A study by Dekovic and Gerris (1992), found that, among Dutch parents, higher and more complex parental reasoning predicted home observations of authoritative childrearing, indirect positive control, warmth, acceptance, and support. Rohner, Kean, and Cournoyer (1991) in their study on families in West Indies found that physical punishment by parents substantially impaired children's psychological adjustment, particularly when the punishment is frequent and severe, in large part because it contributes to children's feelings of being rejected by parents. Important questions have emerged, however, regarding the desirability and effectiveness of authoritative practices in lower income and minority families. Partly because of chronic financial stress and negative life events, poor mothers in both White and Black families are more likely than their affluent counterparts to value obedience, to issue commands, to be restrictive, and to use physical punishment in disciplining their children (Hoff-Ginsberg & Tardif, 1995; McLoyd, 1990). The occurrence and severity of child abuse are also related to low family income, parental unemployment or underemployment, and economic decline (Belsky, 1993; National Research Council, 1993). Although empirical evidence is limited, poor African American parents, and particularly fathers, appear to be less involved and less emotionally expressive than socioeconomically advantaged parents, but the former feel an important parental responsibility is to keep their children "in line" and out of trouble. Similarly, in a study of three racial groups, Leadbeater and Bishop (1994) found that African American mothers were the most protective, strict, and vigilant, followed by Puerto Rican mothers and Anglo-American mothers. Clearly, there is substantial variability among low income black parents in their parenting styles and their attitudes toward physical punishment. Bluestone and Tamis-LeMonda (1999) found that working- and middle-class African American mothers of children aged 5 to 12 were most likely to use reasoning and other child-centered approaches to discipline and least likely to use physical punishment. Kelley, Power, and Wimbush (1992) reported that Black parents who use power-assertive techniques are as likely as other parents to reason with their children and to consider the children's perspectives. In contrast, Avenevoli, Sessa, and Steinberg (1999) found that African American adolescents showed higher levels of delinquent behavior when parents were authoritative. Extending Elder's (Elder, 1974; Nguyen, & Caspi, 1985) model, McLoyd's (1990) influential review documented

systematic evidence that poverty and near-poor living conditions in African American families bear a direct association with children's impaired socio-emotional functioning and that much of the adverse effect of chronic economic hardship on children is due to its impact on parents' psychological distress and their behavior toward the child. Persistent poverty and financial distress erode parents' ability to provide consistent involvement, support, nurturance, empathy, and discipline; increase the occurrence of coercive and punitive parental behavior; and weaken marital and other inter-parental bonds.

Although researchers have made significant progress in including minority participants in their samples, few studies have explicitly focused on the conceptualization and explanation of parent-child relationships in racial and ethnic minority families (Graham, 1992). Research on low income families show results that questioned idea that authoritative parenting is always associated with optimum outcome among adolescents (Hoff, Larsen and Tardif, 2002). Leung, Lau & Lam (1998) found that among low educated parents in US and Australia, authoritarian parenting was positively related to academic achievement. Some research in the Middle East and Asian Societies suggest that authoritarian parenting was an adequate parenting strategy.

Conclusion

Finally, there is quite clear and consistent evidence that parenting style has statistically significant and substantively large net associations with a wide range of youth outcome variables. Parenting style provides a robust indicator of parenting functioning that predicts child well-being across a wide spectrum of environments and across diverse communities of children. Both parental responsiveness and parental demandingness are important components of good parenting. Authoritative parenting, which balances clear, high parental demands with emotional responsiveness and recognition of child autonomy, is one of the most consistent family predictors of competence from early childhood through adolescence. However, despite the long and robust tradition of research into parenting style, a number of issues remain inconclusive. Foremost among these are issues of definition, developmental change in the manifestation and correlates of parenting styles, and the processes underlying the benefits of authoritative parenting (Schwarz *et al.*, 1985; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Baumrind, 1991; and Barber, 1996). Based on contradictory findings in the literature on the effect of parenting style on child outcomes, it is important to further examine the contention that authoritative parenting has better outcomes for children. Also, due to evidence in the literature that calls for a reconceptualization of the traditional parenting style dimensions, the generalizability among all racial and ethnic groups of the impact of authoritative parenting on achievement outcomes remains questionable. To add to previously noted contradictions, the effect of parenting style on academic achievement should also be examined in view of the influence of the mediating variables of motivation, goal orientation, and self-efficacy. Parenting style is basically a contextual variable, but within the parenting environment (in which specific parenting behaviors are employed to promote achievement) other individual factors may develop that may serve to mediate or strengthen the proposed relationship between parenting style and child outcomes.

It is important to strike a balance between promoting effective strategies of parenting and maintaining sensitivity to cultural norms while guiding parents. This will help to create strong, secure, nurturing family relationships across cultures.

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